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E.O. 12958: DECL: 2035/02/12  
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SUBJECT: PARAGUAY DEBATES HAITI DEPLOYMENT

REF: STATE 12558

CLASSIFIED BY: Joan Shaker, Pol-Econ Chief; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) Ministry of Foreign Affairs America Desk Officer said February 12 there are ongoing internal discussions regarding a Paraguayan desire to deploy in support of the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) under the Paraguayan flag. He said internal discussions are preliminary and the GOP is not yet prepared to make any formal commitment.

¶2. (C) The Peacekeeping Director at the Ministry of Defense (MOD) noted February 12 that the military had no instructions or any other plans regarding a further deployment to Haiti. They are focusing on deploying a 100-man contingent to Congo in support of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT). The MOD seemed unaware of a possible ending of the MINURCAT mission.

¶3. (C) COMMENT: Despite Paraguay's good intentions and desire to help, the required decision making and planning process is unlikely to result in any immediately measurable actions. Even if MINURCAT is canceled, Paraguay will likely still deploy the 100-strong contingent to facilitate the closing of that mission. Post believes it would take Paraguay at least two to three months to train peacekeepers for Haiti, assuming a political decision to proceed were made immediately. However, such a decision requires approval from a Congress that is in recess and a strong push from President Lugo, who is distracted at home by an energy crisis. Intentions notwithstanding, a timely and positive response from Paraguay is unlikely. END COMMENT.  
AYALDE